

CHARIVARIA.

THE Palace of Peace is to be opened on the 28th inst. A little while ago it was feared that the tenant for whom the magnificent structure had been erected would be unavoidably prevented taking up residence there, but it is now possible that she will anyhow be able to make a short stay.

It is stated "on the highest authority" that there is no present intention to make any Cabinet changes. In Mr. REDMOND's view, the "highest authority" has not yet been consulted on the matter.

Says *The Observer*:—"Messrs. Guinness are to erect a brewery in the Manchester district, and Messrs. Jacob are to open a bakery in Lancashire. . . . These firms are the largest of their kind in Ireland, and their determination to seek in England a field for their enterprise is a matter which gives food for reflection." But is beer food? Possibly when one remembers the classic dialogue—"Ad any breakfast, Bill?" "Not a drop!"

A refreshment pavilion in King Edward Park, Willesden, has been burned down by Suffragettes. They are surely carrying their hunger-strikes to absurd lengths.

A doctor has been recommending the telephone as a cure for deafness. We believe there is something in the idea. We have more than once succeeded ultimately in making a telephone assistant hear our call after what appeared to be a sustained attack of deafness.

In spite of the assertion that in Mr. DUNNE's invention the safety aeroplane has been discovered at last, the promoters of the Channel Tunnel intend to persevere with their project.

It is suggested by *The Hospital* that wild flowers, which can be sent cheaply by post or rail, would be welcome gifts in the hospital wards. It is important, however, that they should not be too wild.

"The bilberry harvest," we read, "is now being gathered on the mountains in the Lake district. The fruit this

season are poor." If it will help at all we are quite willing to provide a home for some of them.

The necessity of fresh air for pictures is, a contemporary informs us, being considered by the Louvre authorities. The idea seems to have been rather overdone in the case of "La Gioconda."

According to a bulletin issued by specialists of the Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, appendicitis and other intestinal diseases are due to gloomy spirits. They declare that an absolutely certain preventive for appendi-

mounted the pavement. It is not known what Mr. PATERSON had done to annoy the car.

A suggestion has been made that, in view of the number of children who are lost every year, labels should be attached to every child, giving its name and address. The idea might be carried further. If the words "OF NO VALUE EXCEPT TO OWNER" were to be added, much kidnapping might be avoided.

INTO THE FIRE.

[Fighting at bargain sales, says a daily paper, is growing obsolete.]

WHEN Ermytrude from Oxford Street hies back
She looks not like a Mænad
who has revelled
The long night through. Her
eyes are never black,
Nor rent her robes; her hair
is undishevelled;
She does not hurl the name
(as once she hurled)
Of "cat" at every woman in
the world.

Her temperature is normal,
suave her smile;
Her manner sweet that
formerly was acid;
She heaps her acquisitions
in a pile
Upon the floor, and scans
them, proud but placid.
But oh, that heap, once
moderately slight,
Has risen to a most appalling
height.

I see it at a glance. The
hours she spends
In steady purchase now,
in strife and rages
She squandered once. She

buys threefold, and lends
Most rapid wings to my hard-gotten
wages.

"Ah, would again," I am inclined to
wail,
"That Ermytrude were at it tooth and
nail!"

Triangular Cricket.

"The home side were mainly indebted to S. G. Smith, Haywood, and C. N. Woolley coming together when the second wicket went down at 57."—*Daily Chronicle*.

"These conditions were embodied in a document which was signed by the Hemmings, and Mr. A. Mill, the three great Hemmings, and Mr. A. B. Mills, the three Great Western Railway officials, and six men who formed the deputation."—*Western Morning News*.

We regret that we have never heard of these famous brothers.



FORCE OF HABIT.

Stranger (to Well-known Occupant of Treasury Bench). "EXCUSE ME, SIR, BUT IS THIS THE WAY TO ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL?"

Well-known Occupant of Treasury Bench. "THE ANSWER IS IN THE NEGATIVE."

itis is to smile habitually. An unfortunate friend of ours who tried this has, it is true, not been operated on for appendicitis; he has, however, been relegated to a lunatic asylum.

It is announced that for the Confectioners' Exhibition, which opens at the Agricultural Hall on September 6, a cake is to be made 16 feet in height with a base of 9 to 10 feet in diameter. We are sorry to hear that a number of little boys are already being medically treated for delirium brought on by a mere perusal of the announcement.

Looking into a stationer's shop in Great Newport Street one evening last week, Mr. ANDREW PATERSON, a visitor from Montreal, was hurled through the window by a motor car which had

THE SPREADING WALNUT-TREE.

We were having breakfast in the garden with the wasps, and Peter was enlarging on the beauties of the country round his new week-end cottage.

"Then there's Hilderton," he said; "that's a lovely little village, I'm told. We might explore it to-morrow."

Celia woke up suddenly.

"Is Hilderton near here?" she asked in surprise. "But I often stayed there when I was a child."

"This was years ago, when Edward the Seventh was on the throne," I explained to Mrs. Peter.

"My grandfather," went on Celia, "lived at Hilderton Hall."

There was an impressive silence.

"You see the sort of people you're entertaining," I said airily to Peter. "My wife's grandfather lived at Hilderton Hall. Celia, you should have spoken about this before. It would have done us a lot of good in Society." I pushed my plate away. "I can't go on eating bacon after this. Where are the peaches?"

"I should love to see it again."

"If I'd had my rights," I said, "I should be living there now. I must put my solicitor on to this. There's been foul play somewhere."

Peter looked up from one of the maps which, being new to the country, he carries with him.

"I can't find Hilderton Hall here," he said. "It's six inches to the mile, so it ought to be marked."

"Celia, our grandfather's name is being aspersed. Let us look into this."

We crowded round the map and studied it anxiously. Hilderton was there, and Hilderton House, but no Hilderton Hall.

"But it's a great big place," protested Celia.

"I see what it is," I said regretfully. "Celia, you were young then."

"Ten."

"Ten. And naturally it seemed big to you, just as Yarrow seemed big to WORDSWORTH, and a shilling seems a lot to a baby. But really—"

"Really," said Peter, "it was semi-detached."

"And your side was called Hilderton Hall and the other side Hilderton Castle."

"I don't believe it was even called Hilderton Hall," said Peter. "It was Hilderton Villa."

"I don't believe she ever had a grandfather at all," said Mrs. Peter.

"She must have had a grandfather," I pointed out. "But I'm afraid he never lived at Hilderton Hall. This is a great blow to me, and I shall now resume my bacon."

I drew my plate back and Peter returned his map to his pocket.

"You're all very funny," said Celia, "but I know it was Hilderton Hall. I've a good mind to take you there this morning and show it to you."

"Do," said Peter and I eagerly.

"It's a great big place—"

"That's what we're coming to see," I reminded her.

"Of course they may have sold some of the land, or—I mean, I know when I used to stay there it was a—great big place. I can't promise that it—"

"It's no good now, Celia," I said sternly. "You shouldn't have boasted."

Hilderton was four miles off, and we began to approach it—Celia palpably nervous—at about twelve o'clock that morning.

"Are you recognising any of this?" asked Peter.

"N-no. You see I was only about eight—"

"You must recognise the church," I said, pointing to it. "If you don't, it proves either that you never lived at Hilderton or that you never sang in the choir. I don't know which thought is the more distressing. Now what about this place? Is this it?"

Celia peered up the drive.

"N-no; at least I don't remember it. I know there was a walnut-tree in front of the house."

"Is that all you remember?"

"Well, I was only about six—"

Peter and I both had a slight cough at the same time.

"It's nothing," said Peter, finding Celia's indignant eye upon him. "Let's go on."

We found two more big houses, but Celia, a little doubtfully, rejected them both.

"My grandfather-in-law was very hard to please," I apologised to Peter. "He passed over place after place before he finally fixed on Hilderton Hall. Either the heronry wasn't ventilated properly, or the decoy ponds had the wrong kind of mud, or—"

There was a sudden cry from Celia.

"This is it," she said.

She stood at the entrance to a long drive. A few chimneys could be seen in the distance. On either side of the gates was a high wall.

"I don't see the walnut-tree," I said.

"Of course not, because you can't see the front of the house. But I feel certain that this is the place."

"We want more proof than that," said Peter. "We must go in and find the walnut-tree."

"We can't all wander into another man's grounds looking for walnut-trees," I said, "with no better excuse than that Celia's great-grandmother was once

asked down here for the week-end and stayed for a fortnight. We—"

"My grandfather," said Celia coldly, "lived here."

"Well, whatever it was," I said, "we must invent a proper reason. Peter, you might pretend you've come to inspect the gas-meter or the milk or something. Or perhaps Celia had better disguise herself as a Suffragette and say that she's come to borrow a box of matches. Anyhow, one of us must get to the front of the house to search for this walnut-tree."

"It—it seems rather cheek," said Celia doubtfully.

"We'll toss up who goes."

We tossed, and of course I lost. I went up the drive nervously. At the first turn I decided to be an insurance-inspector, at the next a scout-master, but, as I approached the front door, I thought of a very simple excuse. I rang the bell under the eyes of several people at lunch and looked about eagerly for the walnut-tree.

There was none.

"Does Mr.—er—Erasmus—er—Percival live here?" I asked the footman.

"No, Sir," he said—luckily.

"Ah! Was there ever a walnut—I mean was there ever a Mr. Percival who lived here? Ah! Thank you," and I sped down the drive again.

"Well?" said Celia eagerly.

"Mr. Percival doesn't live there."

"Whoever's Mr. Percival?"

"Oh, I forgot; you don't know him. Friends," I added solemnly, "I regret to tell you there is no walnut-tree."

"I am not surprised," said Peter.

The walk home was a silent one. For the rest of the day Celia was thoughtful. But at the end of dinner she brightened up a little and joined in the conversation.

"At Hilderton Hall," she said suddenly, "we always—"

"H'r'm," I said, clearing my throat loudly. "Peter, pass Celia the walnuts."

I have had great fun in London this week with the walnut joke, though Celia says she is getting tired of it. But I had a letter from Peter to-day which ended like this:—

"By the way, I was an ass last week. I took you to Banfield in mistake for Hilderton. I went to Hilderton yesterday and found Hilderton Hall—a large place with a walnut-tree. It's a little way out of the village, and is marked big on the next section of the map to the one we were looking at. You might tell Celia."

True, I might . . .

Perhaps in a week or two I shall.

A. A. M.



A MINISTRY OF SPORT.

MR. PUNCH (*inspecting Candidates for the new Department*). "SELECTION IS INVIDIOUS WHERE EVERYONE IS SO ELIGIBLE; BUT, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, I SHALL PLUMP (IF I MAY USE THE EXPRESSION WITHOUT OFFENCE) FOR HALDANE."

[There is talk of our following the lead of Russia and establishing a Ministerial Department of Sport.]

DEBATE ON SPORTS' OFFICE VOTE.

MR. BONAR LAW rose amidst loud Opposition cheers to move the reduction of the vote for the Minister of Sports' salary by £100:—

"Sir, the conduct of Ministers, degraded, corrupt and incompetent as it is in all spheres, is peculiarly base in the domain of sport. We see foreigners unchecked, untaxed, subsidised by their respective Governments, enter our competitions and carry off our treasured trophies to other lands. This serious drain of silver pots must not be allowed to continue. I put aside with contempt the fallacy that we regain the value of the cups because they are carried abroad in British ships. I say emphatically that unless foreign competitors are handicapped on British ground our day is done. We cannot pretend to stand up against the competition of a protected world. Unless foreign athletes are compelled when performing to bear a burden of at least ten per cent. of their own weight"—(MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: "POOR HACKEN-SCHMIDT!")—"there is no hope of regaining our national supremacy.

"Wherever one looks in the field of British sport one sees cause for grave uneasiness. So far this season the aggregate attendances at the Chelsea Football Ground have only increased by thirty thousand"—(MR. CHIOZZA MONEY: "Hear, hear.")—"That may satisfy the honourable Member for Northamptonshire (E.), but the thoughtful sportsman will contemplate the German figures. The Berlin clubs have this season increased their aggregate attendances twenty-five per cent."—(MR. ROWLAND HUNT: "Shame! Let's have a war," and laughter.)—"twenty-five per cent., and the Chelsea increase is only ten per cent. If this continues where shall we be? I see the handwriting on the wall. The day will come, given a prolongation of the rule of this the worst of all Governments, when excursionists will rush from this country to see the German Cup Final at Berlin." (Loud Opposition cheers.)

"Again, I accuse the Government of gross neglect in not enforcing the Aliens Act against foreign professionals. Blackburn Rovers have spent £5,000 on a centre-forward from Prague. The Cobdenite fallacies die hard in Lancashire. Sheffield United have given British gold for a Peruvian half-back. English money leaves the country, English footballers are thrown out of work, and the Government sits supine, content if they have robbed a Church, ruined an Empire, debased football and drawn their salaries." (Loud cheers and a Voice: "Rub it in!")



Gladys. "OH, BERT, I WONDER IF THERE ARE ANY STALACTITES IN THIS CAVE?"

Bert. "WELL, IF THERE ARE, HAVEN'T I GOT THIS STICK TO DEFEND YOU WITH?"

"But I have an even graver accusation to bring against this all-iniquitous Government. There is nothing in the realm of sport more important than the Derby. When the turf was nationalised I predicted that corruption would creep in even with the sport of kings. This year there chanced to be an Italian runner for the Derby. It was fairly obvious that Ministers wished it to win. They could not hide their love for the foreigner. I state with regret that the CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER and the ATTORNEY-GENERAL received racing tips from the trainer of this foreign horse. The trainer was the ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S brother. And I may say that if there is any intention of promoting the right honourable gentleman to the important post of Judge on the Government race-courses"—(The Chairman: "Order, order. That question hardly arises on this vote.")—"in any case this tip enabled the CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-

CHEQUER to pile up an immense fortune." (MR. LLOYD GEORGE: "Well, now I must explain. I have made no fortune. I am a poor man. The horse ran thirteenth. And, to show that I was not actuated by motives of personal gain, let me state publicly that I have not yet paid the bookmaker." Loud Ministerial cheers.)

"I am content to leave it at that. We see the highest legal authority of the Crown accepting racing tips. We see England's CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, who should be the acutest financier of the country, squandering his money on 'also rans.' Would Mr. GLADSTONE have done that?"—(Opposition shouts of "Never.")—"Would even the present PREMIER, enemy of the Empire as he is, deliberately use his position to back 'also rans'? I doubt it. Would he, if he had made a speculative investment, decline to pay his bookmaker?"—(Cocoa Member: "I hope so.")—"I am sorry that even one

of his supporters should have so low an opinion of him.

"Sir, I have shown the Government to be incapable, base, corrupt, and the friends of the foreigner. I have proved them to be the enemies of British sport, and it is my painful duty to move the reduction of this vote by £100." (Loud and continued cheering.)

"GENTLEMEN, THE DRAMA!"

A MEETING of dramatists to consider Mr. CYRIL MAUDE's suggestion that play-writing should be systematically taught in schools has just been held in the operating theatre at Guy's Hospital. Mr. WALKLEY was in the Chair, and he was supported by some of the leading dramatists of the country, including Mr. MAX PEMBERTON, the Revue King. Mr. MAUDE was also present.

In his opening remarks Mr. WALKLEY said that his own opinion was that everything that the budding dramatist need know was contained in the *Poetics* of ARISTOTLE. (Groans.) The misery of gentlemen present, he added, did not alter the fact. He was born lisping ARISTOTLE's name, and if ever he died, which was unlikely, no doubt it would be with ARISTOTLE's name on his lips. (Renewed commotion.)

Mr. BERNARD SHAW said that too much fuss was being made about what was, after all, only a trick. Play-writing was a gift which some men, such as SHAKESPEARE, had, and others, such as SHAKESPEARE, had not. He would be ashamed to spend more than a few hours on any play, however masterly. (Sensation.) The idea of teaching play-writing was only one degree more absurd than teaching cricket. (Oh! Oh!)

Sir JAMES BARRIE wished Mr. MAUDE's project every success. Nothing could be easier, he held, than to teach successful play-writing. In Mr. MAUDE's words the pupils "would have exercises in dialogue, and would be taught conciseness, crispness, and how to make points. Then they would learn the construction of a play, openings, curtains, and all the vital matters which spell the difference between failure and success." Well, Sir JAMES asked, what could be simpler than that? Crispness and point were, of course, at any one's service, and the circumstance that so many plays were dull and ill-made was

wholly owing to the absence of Mr. MAUDE's scheme of instruction. Henceforward he saw no reason why any play should fail. It was not as if personality counted, as in other forms of art, or as if a sense of life was necessary. (Cheers and counter-cheers.)

Mr. GRANVILLE PARKER denied that the writing of real plays could be taught. Only genius, he held, could produce plays sufficiently true and drab to empty the theatre; which was, he said, the aim of all conscientious craftsmen. Mere entertainments no doubt could be knocked up, but not first-class plays of the order indicated. (At this moment a painful sensation was caused by Mr. SHAW's sorrowfully leaving the room.)

Mr. LOUIS N. PARKER, who looked

agreed with every word that Mr. MAUDE had said. Play-writing could be taught and should be taught—in fact, he had done something to teach it himself, as readers of his "How to do it like billy-oh" papers, recently running in *The English Review*, would remember. All that was needed was a clear-headed expository instructor, an apt pupil, paper, pen and ink. If they had a few minutes to spare he would show them. (Panic.)

Sir ARTHUR PINERO paralysed the company by asking in what way his latest play would have been improved had he attended a class for dramatists. No one replying, he sat down in silent and sarcastic triumph.

In the gloom that followed, the meeting silently dispersed, and Mr. MAUDE

returned to his theatre to complete arrangements for a number of new plays, none of which was written under instruction.

We hear that several of the public schools have taken so kindly to Mr. MAUDE's suggestion that they are already in negotiation with well-known dramatists to act as coaches. After the passage in *Peter and Wendy* describing Captain Hook's education, the headmaster of Eton had no alternative but to invite Sir JAMES BARRIE to instruct the Etonians whom he understands so well. Harrow has thrown out feelers towards the Brothers MELVILLE. Mr. MAUGHAM goes to Rugby, Mr. HOUGHTON to Winchester, Mr. DE COURVILLE to Ardingly, and Mr. GALSWORTHY to the School of Economics.

Meanwhile *The Daily Sale*, ever on the look-out for objects for its single-minded munificence, is offering £5,000 (five thousand pounds) for the best play written by a school-boy under sixteen fresh from a dramatic class, to be entitled *The Failure of Pickles*. The editor's decision to be final. A further sum of £2,000 (two thousand pounds) for the best "Pimplet" concocted from the above phrase.

"Another of Hodder and Stoughton's autumn books will be a snoring edition of Sir J. M. Barrie's 'Quality Street.'" *Liverpool Courier*.

Just the book for the bedside.

"STRIKE OF PUTTERS," announces a contemporary. Our own has refused to do its job for weeks.



THE CHANNEL TUNNEL.

TIMID PEOPLE, EVEN IN THE IMPROBABLE EVENT OF A HOSTILE FORCE BEING IN POSSESSION OF CALAIS, NEED HAVE NO FEAR WHILST WE HAVE STURDY BRITISH CONDUCTORS ON THE TRAINS.

somewhat fatigued from his efforts in dramatising the Old Testament and satisfying Mr. BROOKFIELD with his tact and discretion, offered to teach play-writing to any pupil in six months—"provided he had the mind." (Mr. CYRIL MAUDE: "I forgot that.")

Mr. GALSWORTHY agreed that play-writing could be preceded by much useful learning; but it was not the learning of the schools but of the hard grey world. Coal mines, factories, prisons, mean streets—these were the proper training-ground of the dramatist. (Cries of Help!)

Mr. CECIL RALEIGH urged that Mr. GALSWORTHY had omitted the best school of all—Justice BARGRAVE DEANE's court. "All I ask," he said, "is two boards and a divorce case." (Loud cheers.)

The Revue King, who was greeted with cries of "No! No!" sat down again amid great applause.

Mr. ARNOLD BENNETT said that he

THE EDUCATION OF THE BRITISH ATHLETE.



"LET'S HIRE THIS LITTLE BLIGHTER; WE'LL SHOW HIM WHAT'S WHAT—WHAT?"



"COME ON, GUIDE! HURRY UP AND SEE THE WONDERFUL VIEWS."



"WHY WILL THE SILLY ASS POINT OUT VIEWS? COUNTRY FIT ONLY FOR FLIES."



THE SUMMIT!

PAGES FROM THE DIARY OF A FLY.

(By our Charivariety Artiste.)

III.

My narrow escape from a watery grave brought on another fit of nerves, and I quietly left the room and crawled upstairs and lay down on the library sofa again. Is it, I wonder, an unlucky house? There are such things. I may leave to-morrow.

What a deal of tragedy there is in a fly's life, if one comes to think of it. Few of us—only, I should say, an infinitesimally small proportion—die in our beds. Death is always lurking at our elbow. For example, each winter hundreds of thousands of us—all, in fact, who cannot manage to get to the Riviera—perish of cold. Something, I cannot help thinking, might be done to prevent this appalling mortality. I have seen moths, for instance, in expensive fur coats. If they can do it, we ought to be able to do it. But it is rather of the sudden deaths—the violent ends—that I was thinking. Take my own family. I have already mentioned the cases of my poor mother and her mother before her. My paternal grandfather, when asleep in an arm-chair, was sat upon by a man weighing eighteen stone. My brothers and sisters, Frank, George, Mary, Daphne, Joyce, Patience and Iris, when mere youngsters, were all trapped in treacle, and my father perished in an heroic attempt to rescue them. A spider got my dear sister Ermyntre, and birds ran off with Dulcie, Clarence, and Stephen. Guy—powerful fellow though he was—had his spine broken by a horse's hoof. Marmaduke was pulled to pieces before his mother's eyes by a brat of a boy.

Then there was the case of Reginald. Reginald was our black sheep, and consequently his mother's favourite. He took to drink. It was perhaps scarcely his fault. He was egged on by others. It began in a small way. Out of curiosity he looked into a public-house one day. Some men there gave him a drop of beer. Apparently it amused them to see him intoxicated; the thought of it is sufficiently humiliating. The liking for strong drink grew upon Reg., and he became a public-house loafer. He would even steal beer. One day—possibly he was under the influence—he missed his footing on the inside wall of a tankard, fell into a half of bitter, and—it is almost too gruesome to tell—was swallowed by a bricklayer—without even enjoying the wasp's satisfaction of stinging the fellow as he went down. He left 51 widows and 3,071 children; for Reginald, in spite of his weakness, was an exceptionally hand-

some and taking fellow. By a mere chance the tragedy was witnessed by a friend of ours who happened to be on the bar counter at the time, and he gave us a full account of the affair—including a description of the coughing, spluttering, and swearing of the dirty toper who became, so to say, the grave and monument of my poor brother. It nearly killed my mother, and made teetotalers of such of us as had hitherto been in the habit of taking a drop now and then.

Another of my family perished through over-eating. My half-sister Geraldine had the good fortune, as she thought, one afternoon, to be the only fly imprisoned under the muslin cover over the cakes in the window of a confectioner's shop. It was the opportunity of a lifetime, and Geraldine made the most of it. But it was her undoing. She gorged and gorged and gorged. Then suddenly she felt a rush of blood to the head, there was a loud report, and then no more Geraldine.

Thus does misfortune dog our footsteps. And what about the "mysterious disappearances"? There have been hundreds of these in our family. Some few may possibly be explained by elopements, but the great majority point to a violent end. Not always, though. An old friend of mine—I had known her in her maiden days—lost one of her youngsters. Again he was the black sheep and the favourite—I don't pretend to understand these things—and the mother wore herself to a skeleton searching for him. One day, just as she was thinking she must give up the quest as hopeless, she spotted the young gentleman in a butcher's shop. "My dearest, dearest pet!" she cried as she rushed towards him. "Hulloa, Mother; fancy meeting you!" said the callous young beast, licking his chops and scarcely looking up. That is your modern young fly! He left home, he had the good taste to tell the old lady, because he found it dull there and the restrictions irksome, and it was only with the greatest difficulty, and after a promise had been given that nothing should be said if he came in late at nights, that Master Archibald was persuaded to return home!

Still, that was an exceptional instance. The mysterious disappearances which are so common with us are too horrible to contemplate . . .

There is a question which I often think about. What becomes of us after death? Some say currants, and there is an end of us. I don't believe this. I believe we become angels—for we can fly. I wonder . . .

In the act of wondering I fell asleep.

FINIS.

THE YELLOW GNOME.

Hush!

Creep at the cool of dusk
By a rill where sleeps the rush;
By a fern-choked fence
Where meadow-sweet and musk
Faint opiates dispense.

Whist!

Steal through the languid mist
Drowns from the poppy's wound,
Sweet from the trodden clover,
Hurry tip-toe over.

Creep!

As the owl's low note is crooned
Hollow, mellow, deep,
Enter a wood, dark, old;
Step light on the yielding mould
O'er many a moulted plume;
Wake not a note of sound
Across the slumb'ring gloom.

Steal!

Stoop low to the velvet ground.
Kneel!
Behind a leafy mound—

See!

At the waist of the mouldering tree,
On the lip of the ragged hole,
In the stricken moss-grown bole,
There's a rogue of a yellow
Little fellow
Of a gnome

At the porch of his vaulted home.

"Where?"

There!

See!

With his chin on his gnarled knee,
Thumbs on shin,
Lips a-grin—
So.
See?
"No?"

Elbows bare,

Tangled hair

Like weed on a yellow beach;

Nose awry,

Glowing eye,

Now green as a mildewed peach,

Now saffron hot, then sapphire cool,

Like gems in a moonlit pool.

See? "No?"

Not yet?" Oh, oh!

Why, bless—

Ah, yes!

Too loud, too loud!

He's gone for good

In a musty cloud,

In an odorous shroud

Of rotten wood!

"COW IN THE BULL HOTEL."

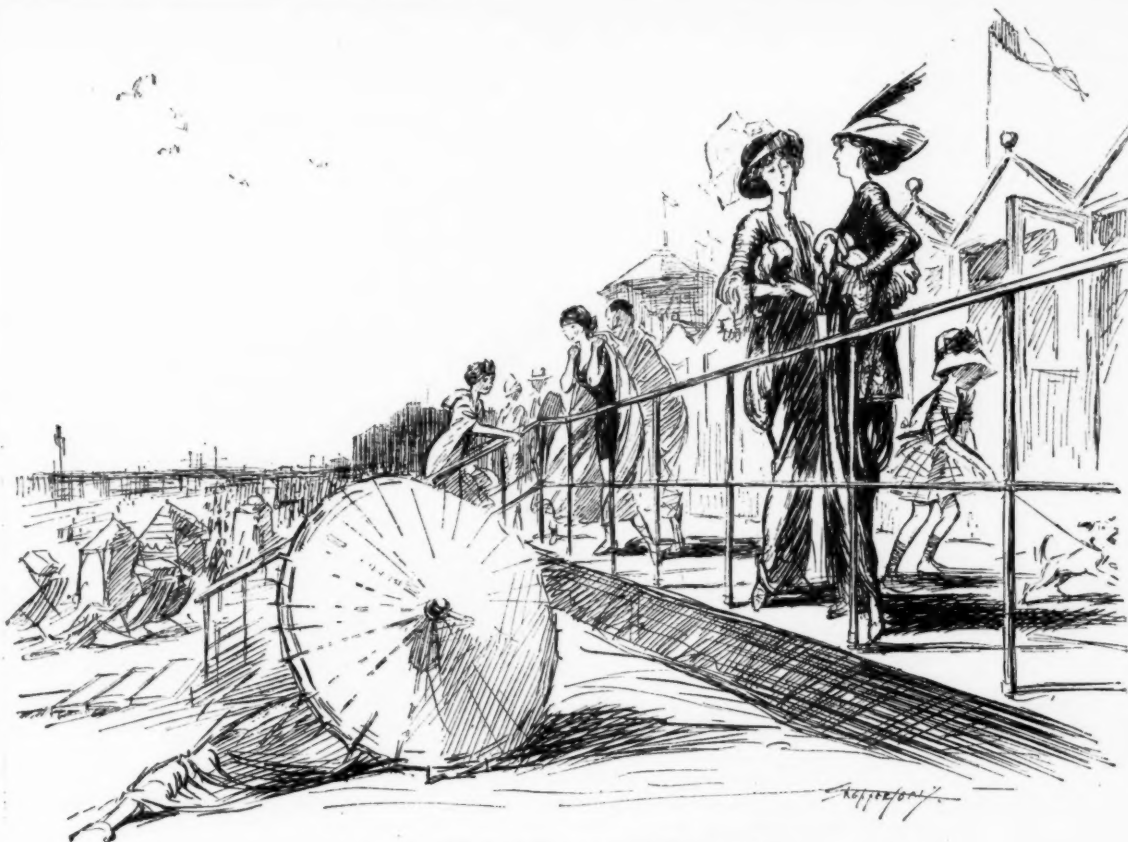
Essex County Telegraph.

The forward sex!

"Thanks mostly to a stand by G. N. Foster and Perrin, when things were critical, Leicester left off with 127 for four wickets."

Daily Mirror.

Very sporting of Worcestershire and Essex to allow this.



THE CULT OF THE PEKY-PEKY.

First Owner of Prize Doglet. "THESE SEASIDE PLACES DON'T APPEAL TO ME THE LEAST LITTLE BIT. BUT OZONEVILLE WAS RECOMMENDED TO GIVE TONE TO CHOO-CHOO'S NERVES. HE'S BEEN SUFFERING FROM SEVERE SHOCK THROUGH SEEING TWO FEARFUL MONGRELS HAVE A FIGHT IN THE PARK ONE DAY. YOUR LITTLE THINGY-THING'S OFF COLOUR TOO?"

Second Owner of Prize Doglet. "YES, A BIT RUN DOWN AFTER THE SEASON. SORRY, BUT I REALLY MUST HURRY AWAY. BAND'S BEGINNING TO PLAY SOMETHING OF BALFE'S, AND I NEVER ALLOW MING-MING TO HEAR BANAL DÉMODÉ MUSIC."

SADIE AND THE LAVENDER MAN.

SADIE and her "Pop" were doing London exhaustively. On a certain dull August morning they were in a taxi, sampling the suburbs, when Sadie suddenly called a halt.

"What's the trouble, baby-child?" asked "Pop," as the chauffeur brought them up short. "Nothing to see in *this* old place, anyway!"

"Maybe not, Pop, but something to *heer*," cried Sadie, her bright face alight with joyous triumph and her finger raised. Sure enough, in the distance sounded the remote, melancholy, mysterious cry of a lavender man.

"Sit up and take notice, Pop! That's the last, the *vurry* last, of the old London Street Cries! There was haf a hundred and more in old times, and now there's only the Sweet Lavender Cry—the *vurry* last survivor. Isn't it a lovely chant?" and Sadie raised her voice,

which was not quite so pretty as her face, and sang the opening bars:—

"Will you come buy my sweet lav-en-der?"

"I know all about it, Pop, and I've been after that dear old cry ever since we concluded to sample Greater London this morning. It's one of the oldest of the old street cries; and the finest lavender comes from a place called Mitcham, way down south-west of London. For centuries it's been grown there; and for centuries the same families have cried it through the streets of London. The industry, by what I learn, has been kept *vurry* much among one set of folks, like a good many British institutions, and the dear old cry has been handed down from father to son; that's what makes it so interesting and so romantic; and that's why it seems to strike some old hidden chord somewhere in one's being. Guess this *vurry* man's ancestors sang that old lavender

chant through the streets of Old London, and *our* ancestors hearkened to it before ever they thought of booking passages by the *Mayflower*."

The lavender man, with his loud and somewhat raucous chant, had approached the stationary taxi by this time, and Sadie, after listening rapturously to him at close quarters, beckoned him and proceeded to buy up his whole stock. "The whole crowd'll want some," she said; "Mamma and the boys, and Clytie and Edna—real, genuine Mitcham lavender, bought of a real, genuine, traditional, British lavender man. Say, Pop," as a new idea struck her, "what's the matter with our taking this man back, right now, to the Savoy and getting a record of the last of the old London street cries for my phonograph?"

"Best not take him back with us, Sadie," objected "Pop" in an aside. "Looks like we should be taking more



MODEST BUT SHORT-SIGHTED BATHER FINDS THE STONE WITH WHICH HE HAD WEIGHTED HIS BATHING-CLOAK MUCH HEAVIER THAN HE HAD IMAGINED IT.

than him if we took him. Let him clean himself some and come to the Savoy later, if you want a record of his old cry. Seems a mighty dull specimen. Hasn't said a word yet."

"No; isn't that perfectly lovely? Such true British taciturnity. Dear, dull, silent, moss-grown folks they are."

To the lavender man Sadie proceeded to explain: "We want a record of that lovely old cry of yours. We're from the other side; but we know all about lavender; how it's grown at a place called Mitcham, and all you lavender men live there in a sort of little settlement to yourselves, just as your fathers and grandfathers did before you; and you've learned the dear old chant from generation to generation, your father teaching it to you and his father teaching it to him, and so on way back till it's enough to give anyone brain fever to think of it! It's a perfectly perfectly sweet notion! And the fact that you don't answer anything I say to you is just right—shows what a true, genuine British lavender man you must be."

"Fine capacity for silence," to quote the late THOMAS CARLYLE, of Eccle-

fechan, Scotland, and Chelsea, London," put in "Pop."

"Well, now," went on Sadie, "that's what we want of you—a record of this splendid old chant, that's come down from father to son through the centuries. You'll come to the Savoy Hotel, Strand, and sing it good and hard into a phonograph—and you might add a few particulars of the life at the Mitcham lavender settlement and how far back you can trace your descent from the original old lavender men, and we'd give you seven dollars—or, say a pound and a half, British money. Take it or leave it."

"Scuse me, lidy," interrupted an expert in bottles and bones, who had stopped pushing his barrow in order to listen, and now drew up, "but it ain't no use arstin' that bloke nothin'—you won't get no change out of 'im. Lives in same 'ouse as me out Bednall Green way, 'e does, and 'e on'y landed 'ere last week, and earn't speak nothin' but Yiddish—couldn't tip you a word of English, not if it was ever so!"

"But—but he was singing the old lavender cry," urged Sadie desperately.

"Oh—that! Yus, lidy, 'e was chuckin' it out cert'nly, but they learns 'em that at the place where they gets their stock o' lavender."

"Guess this vurry man's ancestors cried that lovely old cry through the streets of Old London, and our ancestors hearkened to it before ever they thought of booking passages by the *Mayflower*," quoted "Pop" musingly, as the taxi sped away again on its suburb-sampling mission. "Another illusion knocked out, baby-child!"

"Don't rub it in, Pop!" pleaded Sadie; and then, with a sudden movement, she threw all her recently-purchased lavender into the road. "Perishing old stuff! Reckon even *that's* imported! And maybe there's no such place as Mitcham, anyway!"

"TYPHUS IN GLASGOW.

TWENTY-EIGHT CASES.
AILMENT WELL SPREAD."

These cheerful headlines appear in *The Glasgow News*, not *The British Medical Journal*.



WOODROW ON TOAST.

PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON, U.S.A. "IF YOU DON'T TAKE CARE, I SHALL HAVE TO TREAT YOU THE SAME WAY AS EUROPE TREATS THE TURK."

MEXICO. "AND HOW'S THAT?"

PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON. "WELL, I SHALL HAVE TO—TO GO ON WAGGING MY FINGER AT YOU."



THE CALL OF THE WILD WAVES.

"WELL, LANCELOT, WE WILL GO DOWN TO THE SANDS JUST ONCE, BUT DON'T LET US CAPE ABOUT LIKE THE COMMON HERD JUST BECAUSE WE ARE AT THE SEA-SIDE."

THE FALL.

THE LAST LAY

Of an illegible Poet, whose typewriting machine, having occasion to travel, collapsed en route.

Is Cuthbert broke? Is Cuthbert dead?
Shall he no more display
His rampant S, his couchant Z,
His slightly jaded A,
His errant colon, sudden stop?
Hath Cuthbert had a fatal drop?

'Tis so indeed. Too dead is he
To type a final R. I. P.

A porter man of coarse physique,
Who'd never paused to note
The verse, appearing week by week,
That I and Cuthbert wrote—
A porter man it was by whom
Befell this comprehensive doom—

A porter man, who didn't choose
To mind poor Cuthbert's P's and Q's.

By day, when I am other than
The thing I am by night,
I practise as a Business man
And little else I write

Save "Yours to hand . . ." "the thirteenth inst. . . ." "And such-like phrases, bald, unminced.

And even these I but dictate
For others to elucidate.

The shaded lamp, the evening meal,
The alcoholic cup,
These bring my gentler muse to heel
And keep me sitting up
Inditing verses by the score,
While others lie abed and snore;

But verses, which no human eyne
Could later read—not even mine.

Till Cuthbert came, when poems which
Had little use of old
Were now discovered to be rich
In seams of sterling gold,
And, what is more, to scan and rhyme
And earn a guinea every time.

And doth the sudden end of Cuth
Involve the end of me? It doth.

That I am loth to fill his place
Is not from sentiment,
But only that I cannot face
The money to be spent,

For twenty pounds is surely what
May be regarded as a lot.

"Dictate 'em to the clerk," you say?
The notion takes my breath away.

To call in person, sit beside
The Editorial chair,
And, once a week at eventide,
Declain one's verse from there
Would be a gross unkindness to
My Editor, nay, hero, who

This once (but, mark, this once alone)
Has taken stuff by telephone.

Another Near Eastern Problem.

"Russian warships have been ordered to Sevastopol. It is thought that this move is in connection with Turkey's refusal to evacuate Constantinople."—*Aberdeen Free Press.*

We all know that Turkey has a yielding nature, but this is asking too much of her.

"According to Kobe advices, refugees from China are daily swelling. Reuter."
Western Daily Mercury.

The Kobe mosquito is notorious among travellers.

AT THE PLAY.

"THE BIG GAME."

It was on the third night that I paid a visit to the New Theatre, and was struck, before the rise of the curtain, by the curiously ingenuous and undistinguished aspect of the stalls. I half feared that they had been misled by the title of Mr. CARROLL's play and were anticipating the appearance of some of the larger fauna of the African continent. It was true that, in the hands of Destiny, a rhino had laid the seed of all the trouble, but he had been dead some ten years before the opening of the play, and consequently did not face the footlights. It was like this.



"THE BIG GAME."

SCENE—Central Africa. TIME—Ten years or so before rise of curtain.

[NOTE—The track of the fatal bullet is indicated by a dotted line.]

Dying Rhino. "There 'll be trouble about this. I shouldn't be surprised if a pretty bad play was written on the subject."

Mr. and Mrs. Ross and their particular friend, Mr. Grimshaw, were on a shooting trip in Central Africa. One fine day a rhino charged the first-named. The native who was carrying his rifle threw it away and fled. Mr. Grimshaw at once discharged his piece at the monster, and at the same moment Mr. Ross ran across the line of fire and intercepted the bullet. Mr. Grimshaw, having received his friend's dying confidences, married the widow, and gave out for convenience that the deceased had perished of fever. His conscience was quite clear as to the accidental nature of Ross's death, and fortunately the lady, who witnessed the episode, was in a position to support his view.

All, then, might have gone moderately well in the home circle but for the fact that the extinct sportsman had left behind him a son, who adored his memory and detested the step-father, whom he

suspected, without any good reason, of complicity in his parent's death. Like a little Hamlet he sets himself to avenge that death, and it was indeed a cursed spite (both for him and the audience) that he should have felt called upon to put things right. For, unlike the King of Denmark, the late Mr. Ross was not nearly so white as he was painted. He was, in fact, a bigamist, and, in the article of death, had confided to Grimshaw the guardianship of his extra wife. Faithfully he executes the trust, concealing it, of course, from his wife, who cherishes the memory of her late husband as a model type, "a man in a million." Young Hamlet, however, sniffing a rat (as it might be

Act, where the legitimate wife pays her conventional visit of inspection to the illegitimate. The play, indeed, was only saved by the intervention of little Miss EILEEN ESLER, who played with great charm and intelligence the precocious part of Kitty "Morrison," daughter of Ross by the lady who was his wife "in the sight of God." Apart from her, the relief-humour was of the thinnest.

Mr. FRED KERR, as Grimshaw, did his possible for the play, and was very workmanlike. His brusque manner was admirably suited to the character of a man who didn't mind being a gentleman if only he could escape being a stage-hero. Miss ETHEL DANE, as the innocent lady whom the bigamist

Polonius behind the arras), spies upon his step-father and reports him at home as a base deceiver leading a double life. Grimshaw, persistently noble, declines to clear himself at the cost of his dead friend's honour—always a good line for heroes of the stage. But the family doctor, who knows all and is sensible enough to recognise that a living lion is worth any number of dead dogs, gives the secret away.

It is patent that every step which the boy takes to expose what he imagines to be his step-father's baseness and duplicity only brings him nearer to the loss of his own ideal. Like *Edipus* on the track of his father's slayer, he brings about his own undoing. This is your right Sophoclean irony. But when you have noted that, you have noted practically all that is to be said for *The Big Game*. For, frankly, it was dull stuff, reaching the low-water mark of tedium in the last

had betrayed, never quite secured my sympathy. She had too much the air of a virtuous *cocotte*. Mr. BEVERIDGE, a medical *amicus curiae*, with a permanent frock-coat, an Irish brogue and a vein of extremely childlike and primitive humour (largely associated with his umbrella), was not so well served as I have seen him. Miss FRANCES IVOR, as Ross's widow and Grimshaw's wife, bore with a nice serenity the division of her dear heart between her two husbands; and Miss MARGARET DALLAS, as a garrulous menial, saw the fun, and, I hope, the improbability, of her lines.

It was unfortunate that Mr. DENNIS NEILSON-TERRY, in the part of the stepson, Julian Ross, the first part he has "created" (I cull this dreadful word from his own alleged utterance to an interviewer), should have had to represent a spoilt and insufferable prig—or "neuropath," as he put it; for with a young actor who has yet to



Nervous Tourist. "ARE YOU SURE THE DRIVER IS A STRICTLY SOBER MAN? HE DOES NOT LOOK LIKE AN ABSTAINER."

Landlord. "WEEEL, THERE'S NO AN ABSTAINER ABOUT THE PLACE, MAM, BUT HE'S THE NEXT BEST THING TAE IT; YE CANNA FILL THAT YIN FOU."

make his mark in original work an audience is apt to make confusion between the character that he plays and his own personality; and some of us may have been excusably tempted to attribute to Mr. NEILSON-TERRY the conceit and affectation of *Julian Ross*. It was a difficult and outrageous part, and he tried honestly to play it; but he has much to learn in voice and gesture and movement. It is, perhaps, a pity that, in the interview to which I have referred, he should have advertised the merits of *The Big Game* so loudly; for those who allowed themselves to be guided by his youthful judgment must have been sadly let down. O. S.

"More is expected of every class of woman than Girtton or Newnham, and if they have not they wish they had."—*Daily Mirror*.
Surely you see that?

"Startled by the impact of bat and ball, it has been said that rabbits often scurry across the Worcester ground, but the two Surrey batsmen showed no such timidity."

Daily News.

HOBES and HAYWARD are no rabbits.

THE ADDED CUBIT.

[A doctor claims to have discovered a compound which will increase the height even of adults, though it is most efficacious in the case of children.]

Fired by a firm resolve to rise
To heights untouched before,
And daunted not by frequent tries
To make my inches more,
I bought a bottle of this boon,
A large one, and a table-spoon.

"My son will note a change in me,"

Thought I, "and much admire
The strapping man that used to be
His far too puny sire,
And murmur in respectful tone,
'Oh, mother, hasn't father grown!'"

Alas, I did not count upon
His passion for research.
One morn I found the bottle gone
From its accustomed perch.
The youngster sought to know (and touch)
What is it father likes so much.

He drained this wondrous draught of mine,
And youth's the time to shoot,
So at the early age of nine
He tops me by a foot,
And, when he argues with his Pa,
Treats him too much *de haut en bas*.

The Coming of Autumn.

"Sir John Simon has already consented to address a series of Free Trade meetings in the autumn, which begins in Glasgow in October."
Manchester Guardian.

And in England a few days earlier, as usual.

Mr. AYNESWORTH, as reported in *The Evening News*:—

"It is, as you know, adapted from 'La Prise de Berg-op-Zoom,' an alliterative title." We should never have guessed it.

"Wanted a dwarf or midget. Must be small."—*Advt. in "Daily Chronicle."*

The conditions are too arduous. If the advertiser were not so absurdly particular he would get many more applicants.

RE-SESSIONAL.

(With grateful acknowledgments to the Parliamentary Representative of "The Daily Chronicle," the lines that follow being little more than a metrical version of the subjoined passages from his Review of the Session.)

["The Liberal party has had its ups and downs in the past Session, and on a few occasions it was confronted with very embarrassing, not to say perilous, situations. From all of them, under the cool and skilful guidance of the Prime Minister, it emerged not only without discredit, but with added strength—indeed, fortified and purified by the discipline of adverse circumstances. . . . Mr. Asquith has mastered the secret of getting profit for his Ministry out of circumstances of peril. . . . Mr. Asquith is an Englishman to his fingertips. Yet this typical Englishman has succeeded in winning the unqualified devotion of the Irish Nationalists. At the banquet given to the Prime Minister by Mr. Redmond, the warm-hearted Irishmen were almost swept off their feet by a thrilling passage in Mr. Asquith's speech in which he acknowledged his gratitude to 'my Irish comrades.' . . . Next to the Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George has bulked largest on the Parliamentary stage. His daring and supple genius has been of inestimable value to the Liberal party. He was winged for a time by the wretched tracasseries of the Marconi affair, but quickly recovered."]

After noting Mr. LLOYD GEORGE'S "apostolic fervour" for social reform, the writer goes on to describe Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL'S "pean on oil fuel" as a remarkable performance, enlarges on the exceptional humanity of Mr. McKENNA, the "flowering out" of Mr. MASTERMAN into a first-class Parliamentarian, and the all-round competency of Sir JOHN SIMON, "who shines with equal lustre in the House of Commons and at the Courts." In a previous issue he dilates on Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR'S championship of the small nationalities, especially the Armenians.]

We Liberals in the twelve-month past have had our ups and downs;
We basked awhile in Fortune's smile, and wilted 'neath her frowns;
Yet, though this arduous discipline our grit has sorely tried,
We've issued from the ordeal completely purified.

Our wonderful PRIME MINISTER full-throatedly we bless
For turning to our profit each Ministerial mess;
He pilots us through perilous seas, where surging billows boil,
But hitherto has never lost his little can of oil.

Besides, he has no maggots in his massive English brain;
He's free from thrills and Celtic frills, he's sturdy and he's sane;
Yet when he called the Irishmen at REDMOND'S festive board
"My comrades," from O'CONNOR'S eyes the teardrops freely poured—

O'CONNOR, ceaseless eulogist of all that's *chic* and smart;
Who takes the poor Armenians to his all-embracing heart;
Whose loving human kindness, saponaceous and serene,
Reaches the lactic level of the richest margarine.

Next to our priceless PREMIER, I must essay to paint
The superhuman virtues of our Cambrian super-Saint;
Who joins the lion's daring to the slither of the eel,
With his "apostolical fervour" and his Athanasian zeal.

Immune from all the weaknesses that hamper common Dukes,
He thrives upon exposure and he battens on rebukes;
And, the deeper that he flounders in the mud of ill renown,
The more insistently he claims to wear the martyr's crown.

Next comes the only WINSTON, whose exuberance is such
That we cannot eulogize it or disparage it too much;
His Marconi exhibition was magnificent, of course,
But it showed less thought for others than vituperative force.

Still, after GEORGE and ASQUITH, he's quite our brightest jewel,

And we all admired his memorable "pean on oil fuel,"
Whose far reverberations cheered Lord MURRAY of Peru
On his journey from Bolivia to the wilds of Timbuctoo.

Of the admirable RUFUS 'tis perhaps enough to say,
As a man and as a brother, that he's perfect in his way.
While MASTERMAN, whose unction is exuded with such tact,
Is quite the shoving leopard of the great Insurance Act.

Though SIMON'S not so simple as his surname might suggest,
And the way the Tories praise him stirs misgiving in my breast,
Though he scorns to bluff and bluster or indulge in cheap retorts,
Still "he shines with equal lustre in the Commons and the Courts."

The facetiousness of BIRRELL is alone worth twice his screw;
And a dilatory magic gilds the utterance of CREWE;
JOHN BURNS'S self-assurance is unshattered up till now,
And HALDANE still can perorate the hind-leg off a cow.

Last comes the mild McKENNA, so tremendously humane,
That to stamp upon a beetle gives him agonising pain,
And with such a noble passion for veracity imbued
That he beats the best achievements of an amateur like FROUDE.

In fine, however sketchily the Liberal artist paints
The variegated progress of his heroes and his saints,
He cannot fail to recognise that, though severely tried,
Their spiritual nature has been wholly purified.

THE GLACIER.

"THIS," said Francesca, "is your excursion, and I refuse to bear any responsibility for its consequences."

"Consequences!" I said. "What consequences can there be?"

"I have already," she said, "got a blister on my right foot, and my throat is choked with dust."

"I admit that, in a sense, these are consequences, but I am bound to point out that you must bear them yourself. I cannot change feet or throats with you."

"I don't want you to," she said with dignity; "but why have we hired a carriage?"

"We have ordered a carriage," I said, "in order that it might precede us as we ascend these steep Swiss roads. It makes a dust; but what of that? It is a comfort to know that the carriage is there."

"For all the good we've had out of it, it might just as well not have been there," she said. "Two hours have gone by since we started and we have not been in it for more than ten minutes."

"And that is due to the kindness of our hearts. We cannot bear to inflict unnecessary suffering on the horses."

"Then we should have left them in the stables."

"No, for then we should not have had the beautiful consciousness of self-sacrifice. It is for the sake of the horses that your foot is blistered and your throat parched. Let this thought console you as you limp through the dust."

"But you," she said, "have no such consolations; and that is what annoys me."

"Francesca, you are an unselfish creature; but if both my feet were one solid blister your pain would be the same."



INFLUENCE OF THE RUSSIAN BALLET ON BATHING DESIGNS.

(SALOME AND THE FAUN.)

"Then there's the coachman," she said. "Why doesn't he get off his box and walk sometimes?"

"He is a fat coachman," I said, "and, once on the box-seat, he prefers to stay there. Though I am myself a slim man, I can understand his preference. Perhaps his doctors have told him that carriage exercise is good for him."

"In that case he ought to pay us thirty francs instead of our paying him."

"I will mention it to him," I said, "if you like; but I do not think he will look favourably on the suggestion. They are a grasping lot, these Swiss coachmen, and the law protects them."

"What I am asking myself," said Francesca, "is why we came out on this excursion at all."

"We came," I said, "to see a glacier."

"Pooh!" she said. "What is a glacier?"

"A glacier," I said, "is a sea of ice. That is to say, it is not the sort of ice that you know. It is made of snow. It is always there—"

"Then all I can say is that we could easily have gone some other day, or even imagined it. The things I want to see are the things that are not always there—earthquakes, avalanches and that sort of thing."

"If money could buy an earthquake, you should have it on the spot. But this glacier is not so constantly there—"

"You said it was."

"It is not so constantly there as you seem to think. It moves, you know—only a few inches a day, I fancy, but still it moves."

"But we shan't see the silly thing move."

"No," I said, "perhaps not; but it is grand to know that it can get along without our seeing it. Francesca, there are crevasses in a glacier."

"Page 45 of 'Physical Geography for Beginners.'"

"In face of this great blind natural force your flippancy is misplaced. If, for instance, I fell into a crevasse to-day, and you came back to this glacier forty years hence—"

"I should come in a carriage, you know," said Francesca cheerfully. "I shouldn't walk."

"Yes," I said, "you would probably come in a carriage. Then you would stand at the edge of the glacier and let your mind stray back over forty sad years."

"I've lost my handkerchief," said Francesca.

"You always have. And while you stood there you would suddenly see amongst the stones a gold watch and a large boot with nails in it. That would be me—I mean, those melancholy relics would be all that was left of—"

"You unwoman me," said Francesca. "All the same," she added, "I can't help saying this glacier of yours is a very slow worker, and, if you wanted me to admire it, you haven't succeeded."

"Look! There it is," I said, pointing across the gorge.

"Call that a glacier!" she said. "It's about as big as a large tablecloth."

"Anyhow," I said sharply, "that's all the glacier you'll get to-day. If you wanted something bigger you should have said so. Personally, I admire it very much."

"I don't," said Francesca.

R. C. L.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

USED though I am, more particularly in novels, to those who do, or talk of doing, Big Things, I have never before met so large and mixed a company devoted to this vocation. There is no doubt, of course, that the class of which Sir GILBERT PARKER writes in *The Judgment House* (METHUEN) did much, if not most, of the bringing about and carrying through of the Boer War, but I cannot think that the Magnates of the Rand or the Officials of Diplomacy set about the business in quite the large, direct and melodramatic spirit of *Rudyard Bing* and *Ian Stafford*. They must have given some thought to details; some trifles must have obtruded themselves upon their notice, causing them to show impatience or irritability, to laugh or at least smile; even at such a crisis the tension of the situation and the facial muscles of those who conducted it must have relaxed a little once or twice in a period of some years. On this part of the affair I speak without authority, not knowing by the light of nature, nor having been told with any exact-

ness in the book, how Magnates are created or of what Diplomacy (always with a big, big D) consists. The social and criminal elements of the story are, however, open to the criticism of the man in the street. As to the former, I would argue that the smart and plutocratic set of London is herein credited with a brilliance and breadth of mind not its own; as to the latter, that the murder of *Adrian Fellowes* cast too long a shadow before it. And when it did come the identity of the agent was not difficult to guess, though much mystery was made of it. But the important thing for his many admirers is that Sir GILBERT has written another novel; and nothing that I have said can alter that fact. At the worst, I shall only expect a few of them to agree with me that, while his book is by no means wanting in wit, it would have been much better for a touch or two of humour.

I think I have seldom met with a more obvious example of the short story masquerading as a novel than *The World's Daughter* (LANE). The first two parts of the tale, which take one hundred and sixty-five pages to tell, are all about the events of one day. True, it was an extremely crowded day. In the morning the hero met the heroine quite casual-like at a railway station. The heroine was missing trains, and the hero, who was a perfect stranger (and a far from imperfect hustler in such matters), said, "Come along for a pic-nic with me instead," and, a few minutes later, "I love you." They were in the train by this time, and the rest of the book is devoted to the pic-nic and what came of it. Incidentally one may say that it was a somewhat comprehensive outing, involving a bathe in a stream, two accidents—by dive and bicycle—and a night in a friendly cottage. But no one need be really alarmed. The proprieties, though strained almost to breaking-point, do just hold. This is rather more than I can say about the plot, which, after the lovers have got back to town, and she has

sent a wire saying they must part for ever, becomes even tedious. Yet Mr. CYRIL HARCOURT has written an engaging fantasy, which, though it never convinced me, has many delightful moments. In other words, Mr. HARCOURT the plot-inventor will probably owe the success of his book entirely to Mr. HARCOURT the dainty stylist. Heavily treated, his theme would have been intolerable.

I read *The Power Behind* (HUTCHINSON), by M. P. WILLCOCKS, with deep interest, as a novel quite out of the common run. Much of it I have since read a second and a third time, partly from delight in its many beauties of style and diction and descriptive power, and its thoughtful analysis of life, and partly with the wish to get a clearer understanding of its author's design. In the second of these aims I confess to have fallen short of success. The girl who is the chief figure is brought into close relationship with three men. She was adopted first of all by an old West Country doctor and naturalist, who in his youth had been the loved but rejected lover of her French grandmother. Then she was secretly married by a masterful young astronomer, who

cared much more about the stars than for the mother of his child, and brought wretchedness and disillusionment into her life. And lastly, when he died because another doctor hesitated too long to perform an operation which would have saved him, she married the almost would-be raulderer, who was old enough to be her father, and became "the power behind" him, so that he played a finer part among his neighbours than he would have done without her help. All this is straightforward enough, and is worked out with taste and discretion.

But I feel dimly that there is a power—that Miss WILLCOCKS has a power—behind it that I have not fully grasped. And to some extent I think that is her fault and not mine. Her canvas is overcrowded with people and ideas. In the title of nearly every chapter there is an abstract thought large enough in itself to furnish material for a separate novel. In this respect her book is inclined to be vague and baffling. But then so is life, with its good in ill and its ill in good. And because *The Power Behind* is a fine picture of life it seems to me a book that is very well worth reading.

Miss MONTRESOR's *The Strictly Trained Mother* (MURRAY) is a gentle chronicle of rather smaller beer than is likely to suit the general palate. The story of *Mrs. Betterton*, ruthlessly managed out of all liberty by her competent daughters and breaking away from home to go and stay with a grandchild, cannot be said to provide matter that is morbidly exciting. The old lady's portrait has been done with skill and sympathy but the daughters' outlines are not free from a rather crude exaggeration. There are no doubt many managing folk who would do well to read this little study of results; though they might only say, "I quite agree!" or "How ridiculous!" without making suitable inferences. For the rest of us I cannot honestly say that there's quite enough interest in this pale narrative.



PASTIMES OF THE GREAT.

MR. HALL CAINE'S ETERNAL QUEST FOR A BOOKSHOP THAT DOES NOT STOCK HIS LATEST MASTERPIECE.